

## Message Text

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51

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 IO-10 /078 W  
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P R 140935Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2446

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ABIDJAN 2150

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IV

SUBJECT: LIBERIAN PRESIDENT TOLBERT ARRIVES FOR OFFICIAL  
VISIT TO IVORY COAST

SUMMARY: LIBERIAN PRESIDENT WILLIAM TOLBERT ARRIVED IN  
ABIDJAN MARCH 12 AT START OF NINE-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO IVORY  
COAST. GOIC GAVE TOLBERT WARM AND ENTHUSIASTIC WELCOME.  
ABIDJAN PORTION OF VISIT TO BE FOLLOWED BY SEVEN-DAY TOUR  
TO INTERIOR. IN ADDITION TO CITING TRADITIONAL TIES WHICH  
LINK THE TWO COUNTRIES, IVORIAN PRESS LAID KEYNOTE EMPHASIS  
ON MEETING OF TWO LEADERS WHO ARE IN FOREFRONT OF DIALOGUE  
INITIATIVE WITH SOUTH AFRICA. AMBASSADOR HAD BRIEF CHAT WITH  
TOLBERT AT DIPCORPS RECEPTION, CONCERNING PURPOSE OF TRIP AND  
NATHANIEL DAVIS APPOINTMENT. END SUMMARY

1. LIBERIAN PRESIDENT WILLIAM TOLBERT ACCOMPANIED BY  
WIFE AND ENTOURAGE OF LIBERIAN OFFICIALS ARRIVED IN ABIDJAN  
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MARCH 12 TO BEGIN NINE-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO IVORY COAST.

AFTER TWO DAYS IN ABIDJAN, TOLBERT ACCOMPANIED BY GOIC PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY WILL TOUR INTERIOR OF COUNTRY MAKING STOPS AT DONDOUKOU, KORHOGO, ODIENNE, MAN BOUAKE AND YAMOUSSOUKRO. DEPARTURE IS PLANNED FROM HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY'S HOMETOWN OF YAMOUSSOUKRO FOR MARCH 21.

2. GOIC GAVE TOLBERT WARM AND ENTHUSIASTIC RECETIPN ON ARRIVAL. PUBLIC HOLIDAY WAS DECLARED MARCH 12 TO ENCOURAGE PUBLIC TO LINE MOTORCADE ROUTE FROM AIRPORT TO PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE. IN WELCOMING SPEECHES, HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY, IN ADDITION TO CITING TRADITIONAL TIES WHICH LINK LIBERIA AND IVORY COAST (COMMON BOUNDARY AND TRIBAL LINKS, COMMON ECONOMIC INTERESTS, SIMILARITY OF VIEWS ON MANY SUBJECTS) LAID EMPHASIS ON TOLBERT'S ROLE AS A "MAN OF DIALOGUE." IVORIAN PRESS, IN HEAVY COVERAGE OF VISIT, ALSO KEYNOTED MEETING AS BETWEEN TWO MEN OF DIALOGUE AND REFERRED TO TOLBERT'S COURAGE IN RECENTLY INVITING VORSTER TO LIBERIA. PRESS NOTED HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY'S LONG-STANDING POLICY OF DIALOGUE AS AN IDEA WHOSE TIME WAS COMING WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA AS WELL AS WITHIN INDEPENDENT AFRICA AND CITED RECENT STEPS TAKEN WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA TO DESEGREGATE CERTAIN THEATERS AND SPORTS EVENTS.

3. IN COURSE OF PRESENTATION OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS TO TOLBERT, AMBASSADOR SMITH HAD OPPORTUNITY BRIEF CHAT WITH LIBERIAN PRESIDENT. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, TOLBERT SAID HE ENJOYED VISITING IVORY COAST BECAUSE EACH TIME HE WAS IMPRESSED WITH ITS ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT. CONCENTRATION OF PRESENT TRIP WILL BE ON OBSERVING AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT. IN RESPONSE FURTHER QUESTION, TOLBERT SAID HE HOPED THAT LIBERIA AND IVORY COAST WOULD DEVELOP JOINT PROJECT ON CAVALLY RIVER (THE BORDER BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES). AMBASSADOR ALSO MENTIONED THAT NATHANIEL DAVIS HAD JUST BEEN CONFIRMED BY U.S. SENATE AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS. TOLBERT REMARKED THAT SOME OF HIS OAU BROTHERS HAD BEEN CRITICAL OF APPOINTMENT BECAUSE OF DAVIS' PRIOR ASSIGNMENT IN CHILE. AMBASSADOR SAID DAVIS HAD PERFORMED HIS ASSIGNED DUTIES THERE AND ELSEWHERE WITH DISTINCTION AND WAS EXPECTED TO DO LIKEWISE IN NEW POST. TOLBERT SAID THAT ANY MAN SHOULD BE JUDGED BY HIS PERFORMANCE IN PARTICULAR ASSIGNMENTS AND LOOKED FORWARD TO MEETING DAVIS IN NEAR FUTURE.

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4. COMMENT: VISIT IS UNUSUALLY LONG IN COMPARISON WITH MOST OTHER RECENT STATE VISITS TO IVORY COAST WHICH HAVE BEEN THREE DAYS OR LESS. RELATIONS BETWEEN LIBERIA AND IVORY COAST ARE OBVIOUSLY EXCELLENT AND TOLBERT TRIP CERTAIN TO BE SUCCESSFUL. EXTENT OF TRAVEL TO INTERIOR OF IVORY COAST ALSO SUGGESTS THAT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY AND PARTY MAY BE USING TOLBERT VISIT AS "CAMPAIGN TRIP" FOR NOVEMBER 1975 IVORY COAST ELECTIONS.

SMITH

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